

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 01959 080312Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03
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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7539
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
USICA WASHDC
SECDEF WASHDC
DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAMASCUS 1959

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PEPR, SY, IQ
SUBJECT: SYRIA CONTINUES TO CHALLENGE IRAQ TO SEND TROOPS

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. SYRIAN PROPAGANDA ORGANS AGAIN ON APRIL 5
CHALLENGED IRAQ TO SEND TROOPS TO THE GOLAN AND SOUTH
LEBANON. THAWRA FRONT PAGED REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT OF
THE PALESTINE PEASANTS' UNION ABUL HAIJA PRAISING SYRIA AND
CONDEMNING IRAQ'S ANTI-SYRIAN RHETORIC. HE ACCUSED IRAQ
"OF EVADING ITS NATIONAL DUTIES ON THE BATTLEFIELD..."
IN CRITICISING IRAQ'S CHARGES THAT SYRIA IS IMPEDING THE
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FLOW OF IRAQI MATERIEL TO THE PLO IN LEBANON HAIJA NEVER
OUTRIGHT DENIES THE CHARGE BUT RATHER CHARACTERIZES
IT AS PART OF A "NAIVE MISLEADING CAMPAIGN." HE THEN
ATTACKS IRAQ FOR FAILING TO JOIN THE "STEADFASTNESS FRONT"
AND CLAIMS IRAQ'S RULERS VIEW DAMASCUS AND NOT TEL AVIV
AS THE ENEMY.

2. TISHRIIN EDITOR AMID AL-KHULI ONCE AGAIN CHALLENGES IRAQ TO SEND ITS FORCES TO THE GOLAN. HE OPENS HIS EDITORIAL BY REAFFIRMING EMPHATICALLY SYRIA'S DETERMINATION TO AVOID A WAR NOT OF ITS TIME AND CHOOSING; THUS, JUSTIFYING SYRIA'S PASSIVITY IN THE FACE OF ISRAEL'S INVASION OF LEBANON. THEN, BORROWING A PAGE FROM SADAT'S LEXICON, HE TERMS IMPERIALISTS, ZIONISTS, "SADATIS," AND "TAKRITIS" AS "DWARFS." HE CONCLUDES BY STATING THAT "WHEN THEY (IRAQ) REGAIN THEIR NATIONAL SENSES THEY WILL FIND SYRIA WAITING WITH OPEN ARMS TO RECEIVE ANY MILITARY CONTRIBUTION DEPLOYED INTO CONFRONTATION (WITH ISRAEL)...SO CAN THE RULERS OF IRAQ RISE TO THIS LEVEL OF PAN-ARABNESS. IN SPITE OF ALL THEIR HATRED, WE SINCERELY HOPE THEY CAN. WE EVEN CHALLENGE THEM TO DO SO..." END UNCLASSIFIED

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3. COMMENT: LOCAL JOURNALISTS TELL US THAT SYRIA IS PRIMARILY RESPONDING TO IRAQ'S CHARGES RATHER THAN SERIOUSLY SIGNALING A READINESS TO HOST IRAQI TROOPS ON SYRIAN SOIL. THESE JOURNALISTS CONJECTURE THAT IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT IRAQ RESPONDS TO THESE CHALLENGES SYRIA WILL SET UNACCEPTABLE CONDITIONS. SYRIA IS CONTINUING TO PERMIT SOME WAR MATERIEL AND OTHER ASSISTANCE FROM IRAQ TO THE PLO TO TRANSIT SYRIA WHILE THESE PROPAGANDA BATTLES CONTINUE.
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